

Braille Monitor



FEBRUARY, 1975

VOICE OF THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND



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THE BRAILLE MONITOR

A Publication of the
NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND
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THE BRAILLE MONITOR

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* * *

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If your wishes are more complex, you may have your attorney communicate with the Berkeley Office for other suggested forms.

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RANDOLPH-SHEPPARD ROUNDUP: THE 1974 AMENDMENTS

BY

JAMES GASHEL

The 93rd Congress of the United States is now in the history books, and by the blind it will be remembered for many decades to come. On December 7, 1974, the 1974 Amendments to the Randolph-Sheppard Act became law as Title II of Public Law 93-516. This victory was accomplished despite almost insuperable obstacles—opposition from Federal employee unions, opposition from many Federal agencies (including the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, the agency responsible for administering the program), and opposition from the White House. For several weeks during October and November the fate of this legislation hung in the balance as the Congress and the President thrashed out the President's right to pocket veto a bill during a congressional recess. Yet the Congress was determined to work its will, and it did in the end.

The new amendments to the Randolph-Sheppard Act, while not everything we would like them to be, represent a giant step forward. In many ways, their force and effectiveness will be felt and tested in the years ahead. In this effort the National Federation of the Blind will be responsible for playing a leading role as we have in the past. To do this we must thoroughly inform ourselves. The following is presented as a summary of the major provisions of the 1974 Amendments to the act.

(1) Under the new amendments, a "priority" is established for blind persons licensed by state agencies in the operation of vending facilities on all Federal

property. The Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare, through the Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration, is assigned the responsibility for promulgating regulations to assure this priority for blind persons. Further, it is declared that: "Whenever feasible, one or more vending facilities are established on all Federal property to the extent that any such facility or facilities would not adversely affect the interests of the United States." The Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare has the final authority for determining whether or not a limitation should be imposed on the placement or operation of a vending facility based on a finding that such placement or operation would adversely affect the interests of the United States.

(2) Throughout the new act the term "vending facility" is substituted for the term "vending stand." The exact significance of this change is found in the definition of "vending facility:" "automatic vending machines, cafeterias, snack bars, cart services, shelters, counters, and such other appropriate auxiliary equipment as the Secretary by regulations may prescribe. . . ." The items which can be sold in a vending facility are designated as follows: "Foods, beverages, and other articles or services dispensed automatically or manually and prepared on or off the premises in accordance with all applicable health laws as determined by the state licensing agency and including the vending or exchange of chances for any lottery authorized by state law and conducted by an agency of the state."

(3) Federal responsibility for carrying out the provisions of the Randolph-Sheppard Act is fixed with the Rehabilitation Services Administration. The commissioner shall, within one hundred and eighty days after enactment of the Randolph-Sheppard Amendments, establish requirements for uniform application of the act by each state agency. Additionally, the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare, through the Commissioner of Rehabilitation Services Administration shall (a) conduct periodic evaluations of the blind vending facility program and annually submit a report to the appropriate committees of the Congress based on these evaluations; and (b) take other steps, including the issuance of rules and regulations as may be necessary or desirable in carrying out the provisions of the act.

(4) The amendments further provide that after January 1, 1975, no Federal agency or department shall acquire or occupy by ownership, rent, or lease any building (or any part of any building) which does not have a satisfactory site or sites for the location and operation of a vending facility by blind persons. The language of the amendments makes clear that there must be consultation between the head of any Federal department or agency and the state licensing agency prior to the acquisition and occupation of Federal buildings or installations. In the event that any Federal department or agency initiates plans to construct, substantially alter, or renovate any facility, the design for the construction, substantial alteration, or renovation must include a satisfactory site or sites for the location and operation of a vending facility by a blind person. Each Federal department or agency shall provide notice to the appropriate state licensing

agency of its plans for occupation, acquisition, renovation, or relocation of a building adequate to permit the state licensing agency to determine whether such building includes a satisfactory site or sites for a vending facility. Final authority for making determinations pursuant to the above provisions rests with the Secretary of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. The Secretary is also given the full authority for determining the exact meaning of the term "satisfactory site" as used in this act.

(5) With respect to the matter of set asides, there have been four uses permitted under the old act—(a) maintenance and replacement of equipment; (b) the purchase of new equipment; (c) management services; (d) assuring a fair minimum return to operators. The amendments permit an additional use for funds set aside from the proceeds of the blind vending facility. This purpose is stated in the amendments as follows: "Retirement or pension funds, health insurance contributions, and provision for paid sick-leave and vacation time. . . ."

The amendments further require that set aside funds may not be allocated to the above mentioned purposes unless approved by a majority vote of blind licensees in the state. The state licensing agency is required to provide each blind licensee with "full financial information on all matters relevant to such proposed programs." Finally, although there is no ceiling placed on the amount of set aside which may be assessed against the earnings of blind vendors, the amendments do state that the set aside must be charged against the "net proceeds" as opposed to permitting this assessment to come from the gross sales.

(6) Major provisions of the new amendments are those which set forth rights of fair hearing and arbitration of disputes. "Any blind licensee who is dissatisfied with any action arising from the operation or administration of the vending facility program may submit to the state licensing agency a request for a full evidentiary hearing which shall be provided by such agency in accordance with Section 3(6) of this Act. If such blind licensee is dissatisfied with any action taken or decision rendered as a result of such hearing he may file a complaint with the Secretary who shall convene a panel to arbitrate the dispute . . . and the decision of such panel shall be final and binding on the parties except as otherwise provided in this Act."

The arbitration panel convened by the Secretary as provided above shall consist of one individual designated by the state licensing agency, one individual designated by the blind licensee, and one individual (not employed by the state agency) who shall serve as chairman and is jointly designated by the members. If either party in the dispute fails to designate a member of the panel, the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare shall designate a member on his behalf.

The arbitration procedure just described which is provided for individual blind licensees is also made available to state licensing agencies when disputes arise with Federal departments or agencies. The new amendments provide that the state licensing agency may file a complaint with the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare whenever it determines that any Federal department or agency is failing to comply with the provisions of the Randolph-Sheppard Act as amended. The

Secretary, after receiving a complaint filed by a state licensing agency shall convene an arbitration panel which shall hear the dispute and render a decision which is binding on all parties.

(7) Of great controversy has been the assignment of vending machine income on Federal property. This simple issue has been the major roadblock preventing enactment of amendments to the Randolph-Sheppard Act in several recent Congresses. During the 93rd Congress, a compromise was struck which, if nothing else, prevented us from losing the entire bill. It may not, however, result in substantial increases in the amount of vending machine income accruing to blind operators. The precise effect of the formula set forth below is not known, but it will partly depend upon the extent to which blind vendors are informed.

Spelled out in the new amendments is a distinction between "direct" and "not direct" competition. It reads as follows: "Direct competition as used in this section means the existence of any vending machine or facility operated on the same premises as a blind vending facility except that vending machines or facilities operated in areas serving employees, a majority of whom normally do not have direct access to the blind vending facility shall not be considered in direct competition with the blind vending facility."

This delineation of "direct" and "not direct" competition is fundamental to the assignment of vending machine income under the act. In all cases where vending machines are operated, serviced, or maintained by a blind licensee, the income from such machines is assigned to the blind vendor. Similarly, in all cases where there is

"direct competition" between a blind vending facility and vending machines which are not operated, serviced, or maintained by a blind vendor, one hundred percent of all vending machine income from such machines is assigned to the blind licensee.

In cases where the competition between a blind vending facility and vending machines is said to be "not direct," Federal facilities and installations having less than three thousand dollars annual vending machine income from vending machines not in direct competition with a blind vending facility are exempt from any provisions assigning such vending machine income to blind vendors. In those instances where this category of vending machine income is greater than three thousand dollars annually, fifty percent of it is assigned to the blind licensee. In the amendments, there is an important exception to this rule. Only thirty percent of the total vending machine income from vending machines not in direct competition with a blind vending facility is assigned to the blind vendor if at least fifty percent of the total hours worked on the premises occurs during periods other than normal working hours. This exception was included particularly at the insistence of postal service employee groups.

It should be noted that in Federal buildings or installations where there is no blind licensee the amount of vending machine income which would normally be assigned to a blind vendor is assigned to the state licensing agency. The vending machine income, which accrues to the state agency, must first be used for "retirement or pension plans, health insurance contributions, and for provisions of paid sick leave and vacation time for blind licensees" if these uses are approved by a

majority vote of operators in the state. Any vending machine income remaining after application to this purpose shall be used only for the remaining four allowed purposes of set aside funds and any assesment charged to operators by the state agency shall be reduced pro rata in an amount equal to the total of vending machine income allocated to these four purposes.

One additional sentence in the section on vending machine income should be emphasized. The amendments insure that no blind vendor shall receive less vending machine income after January 1, 1975, than he received prior to that date.

(8) Under the heading "Additional State Responsibilities," two requirements are set forth. First, the state licensing agency must provide each blind licensee access to all relevant financial data including quarterly and annual financial reports on the operation of the state vending facility program.

The second provision requires that the state agency is to conduct a biennial election of a committee of blind vendors who shall be fully representative of all blind vendors in the state program. The duties of this committee are: (a) participation with the state agency in major administrative decisions and policy and program development; (b) receiving grievances of blind licensees and serving as advocate for such licensees; (c) participation with the state agency in the development of a transfer and promotion system for blind licensees; (d) participation with the state agency in developing training and retraining programs; and (e) sponsorship with the assistance of the state agency of meetings and instructional conferences.

(9) Another provision of the new amendments requires the Commissioner of Rehabilitation Services Administration to insure by regulations that uniform and effective training programs, including on-the-job training are provided for blind individuals. Additionally, the Commissioner shall insure that programs are developed to promote upward mobility and more advanced training or education for blind vendors.

(10) Among some miscellaneous provisions are several types of studies and reports which must be made. First, the Secretary, through the Commissioner, is assigned the task of developing national standards for set asides after full consideration of the views of blind vendors and state agencies. These standards are to be published within six months after enactment. The Secretary is further required to study the feasibility of developing a nationally administered retirement pension and health insurance system for blind operators.

By September 30, the Secretary shall complete a study of the method of assigning vending machine income and its effect on the growth of the blind vendor program and on non-appropriated fund activities on Federal property. Thirty days after completing this study the Secretary shall report the findings and recommendations to the Congress and the President. In this connection, the Comptroller General is authorized to conduct "regular and periodic audits of all non-appropriated fund activities which receive income from vending machines. . . ."

These are the most significant of the amendments to the Randolph-Sheppard Act. They have been a long time in coming, and all members of the National Federation of the Blind who worked hard to see this victory through can now rejoice. Another milestone has been achieved. Much of the effectiveness of the new act will, of course, depend on the regulations which are written to implement it. In this endeavor, we must also play a leading role. □

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETS

BY

PERRY SUNDQUIST

The Executive Committee of the NFB met at National Headquarters in Des Moines, Iowa, over the Thanksgiving holidays. Most of the members arrived Wednesday, with many of their spouses, to be on hand early Thanksgiving Day to partake of the bounteous hospitality of Anna Katherine and Kenneth Jernigan.

The Thanksgiving dinner was, indeed, plentiful and delicious. However, in order to do some essential business prior to such a feast, the Subcommittee on Budget and Finance met and, in consultation with the President and the Treasurer, drafted a proposed budget for calendar year 1975.

In wrestling with the problems and possibilities for the organization, the Executive Committee met continuously from 10:00 Friday morning to 6:30; all day Saturday from 8:30 to 7:00; and Sunday morning from 8:30 to 11:30, when many members had to catch planes and scatter north and south, east and west. The discussion on the many items of the crowded agenda was both far-reaching and in depth. The budget for 1975 was adopted as recommended by the Subcommittee on Budget and Finance.

President Jernigan reminded the members that the NFB now has affiliates in forty-eight states, and detailed plans were set forth for the organization of affiliates in Wisconsin and South Dakota this coming spring. On November 3rd of this year the Wisconsin Council of the Blind voted to withdraw from the American Council of the Blind and not to affiliate at this time with any national organization.

In late November 1974, the Congress overrode President Ford's veto of the 1974 Amendments to the Vocational Rehabilitation Act by huge majorities in both Houses, and a new bill, identical with the one vetoed, was passed by the Congress on November 26th. The new law upgrades the Office of the Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Service Administration, placing it directly under the Secretary of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. The President of the NFB stressed the urgent need for all members to write to President Ford, urging the reappointment of Dr. Andrew Adams, because of the outstanding work which Dr. Adams has done in the field of rehabilitation. Details of this matter were fully discussed by President Jernigan in his Presidential Release of November 7, 1974.

President Jernigan then discussed with the committee the interest of the NFB in the development of the Braille-o-Graph, which, when perfected, will print Braille much faster than the present method. One can make tapes on a Braillewriter and feed them into the Braille-o-Graph.

The NFB public service announcements on both radio and television are now being run throughout the country and frequently. It is estimated that the money contributed in terms of time by the radio and TV stations and networks has amounted to almost a quarter of a million dollars already this year.

The President announced that he had appointed Mrs. Arlene Gashel as

Coordinator on Affiliate Action and that she had resigned her position in the Washington Office to accept the appointment.

At this point a brief time-out was taken so that the members of the committee could visit the large additional office space rented to house NFB literature on the fifth floor of the Randolph Hotel Building, about 3,600 square feet having been acquired for this purpose.

James Gashel, Chief of the Washington Office, then reported on the NFB's efforts during the course of the present 93rd Congress. There is now pending H.R. 17045, the Social Service Amendments of 1974, and we hope that our disability insurance for the blind bill can be added as an amendment when the measure goes to the Senate early in December 1974.

Jim Gashel next discussed in detail the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1974, which, as previously mentioned, had been vetoed by President Ford and subsequently repassed by the Congress. This measure includes extension of authorization of appropriations for research and training, for grants for construction of rehabilitation facilities, for vocational training services for handicapped individuals, for special projects and demonstrations, for program and project evaluation, for the Office for Handicapped Individuals, and for the architectural and barriers compliance board. The new law also contains the Randolph-Sheppard Act Amendments of 1974. [See Mr. Gashel's summary elsewhere in this issue.]

In addition to the NFB efforts on the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1974 and the Randolph-Sheppard Amendments,

our organization helped secure the passage by the 93rd Congress last summer of an escalator provision for the Supplemental Security Income program whereby recipients of SSI will receive increases in their grants when the cost-of-living increase exceeds three percent, this being the same provision which was provided earlier by the Congress for beneficiaries of Disability and Old Age Retirement grants under the Social Security Act.

Mr. Gashel then discussed with the committee the legislative priorities of the NFB for the 94th Congress which convenes early in January. The top priority, of course, remains the disability insurance for the blind bill, unless it has become law by then. An effort will be made to amend the SSI law to require the states to pass along all increases under that program to the recipients. More funds will be sought for the Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped of the Library of Congress. An attempt will be made to require the states to supplement up to at least fifty percent of the Federal SSI payment and to increase from the present twenty dollars a month to forty dollars a month the amount of income from any source which is exempted from consideration in determining the SSI grant. Efforts will be made to have medical benefits made available at the time of the start of disability payments, and to eliminate the five-month waiting period after the onset of disability and the elimination of the two-year period before medical payments can commence. Provisions for the mandatory payment of the minimum wage to workshop employees will be sought, as well as the right of such employees to organize. Finally, an effort will be made to have the Congress adopt nationally our Model White Cane Law.

The President then reported on the great success of the recent seminars which have been held in Des Moines at Labor Day and Christmas time and which have developed a core of Federation leadership. These seminars are highly structured and last three and one-half days each. Only twenty-two or twenty-three persons can be accommodated at the most at any given seminar. Suggestions were sought from committee members for names of likely candidates for the next seminar.

The President asked for and received many suggestions for agenda items for the 1975 National Convention as well as for members of committees.

There followed a discussion of NAC and how that organization is now claiming that it established machinery to insure that one-third of its board will be consumer representatives. Actually, of course, NAC did not honor in any way the agreement which its own ad hoc committee worked

out with the NFB, and so the struggle must go on with increased vigor.

Throughout every session of the Executive Committee, the members returned for lengthy discussions and hard choices brought on by the severe impact which the current recession and double-digit inflation have had on our income. The conclusion was unanimous that if the organization is to continue at anything like its present broad program of assistance to the blind of this country, then it can only be done in one way—by the individual members assuming a major portion of the costs involved. There is just no other way, and details as to how this campaign can be carried out were formulated.

As the members of the Executive Committee said their farewells to each other and headed across the snow-carpeted streets of Des Moines, it was the feeling of all that this was by far the most productive of all Executive Committee meetings. □

HISTORY AND CURRENT STATUS OF REGIONAL LIBRARIES FOR THE BLIND IN THE UNITED STATES

BY

FLORENCE GRANNIS

Editor's Note.—Mrs. Grannis is Assistant Director in Charge of Library and Social Services for the Blind, Iowa Commission for the Blind, Des Moines, Iowa.

Libraries for blind people have existed in the United States since the mid-nineteenth century—Boston Public Library being the first—beginning in 1868. Braille was developed nearly fifty years earlier but in Louis Braille's day, before, and after, many other systems of embossed reading were extant. The chief ones used in the United

States by the time libraries for the blind began to open were Moon (modified Roman letters), New York Point (making the Braille domino horizontal instead of vertical) and American Braille (characterized by an economy of dots—which made writing by hand easier than the others). There was a great problem to have three forms of reading for the blind—school books, Bibles, et cetera, had to be printed in three types at great expense and blind people brought up on different systems could not communicate.

This great cost was one of the factors which gave impetus to having collections of various embossed books in libraries. Few people could afford to buy them—few could afford to house them (they were very bulky). Consequently, during the next thirty to forty years many institutions—some state libraries such as New York at Albany, some city libraries such as the Free Library of Philadelphia, some private libraries such as Perkins Institution at Watertown, Massachusetts, began to circulate books to the blind. All these libraries came into being as a result of the demonstrated need of the blind population in their communities. But after they began their service, requests for books began to come from areas other than those supporting the libraries. The payment of postage was difficult for the libraries and for blind individuals, so in 1904 Congress passed a law which permitted the free mailing of books to blind people.

By 1928, when the American Library Association was involved with the study of blind people's library needs and how they were being met, it was learned that, while some people were borrowing books from several libraries, fewer than 10,000 blind individuals were using any of them at all, and all libraries wishing to acquire books for the blind were having difficulty in obtaining them because—since they were not a commercially practical undertaking—there were so few sources of supply.

The result of this study was a recommendation that the Federal Government undertake to supply free books for the blind to a selected list of geographically well-distributed libraries on condition that these libraries circulate the books to readers in the assigned zones

without reference to whether or not these zones included an area larger than the taxing district maintaining the library. This recommendation resulted in the passage of the Pratt-Smoot bill which was signed into law by President Hoover on March 3, 1931. A joint resolution of Congress was passed the day after the Pratt-Smoot bill was signed. This resolution appropriated \$100,000 for the fiscal year 1932 to carry out the provisions of the Act to Provide Books for the Adult Blind.

Eighteen libraries were selected in addition to the Library of Congress to act as regional distributing centers.

New York State Library, Albany,
New York
Georgia Library Commission, Atlanta,
Georgia
Texas State Library, Austin, Texas
Chicago Public Library, Chicago, Illinois
Cincinnati Public Library, Cincinnati, Ohio
Cleveland Public Library, Cleveland, Ohio
Denver Public Library, Denver, Colorado
Detroit Public Library, Detroit, Michigan
Library of Hawaii, Honolulu, Hawaii
New York Public Library, New York,
New York
Free Library of Philadelphia, Philadelphia,
Pennsylvania
Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh,
Pennsylvania
California State Library, Sacramento,
California
Michigan State Library for the Blind,
Saginaw, Michigan
St. Louis Public Library, St. Louis,
Missouri
Seattle Public Library, Seattle, Washington
Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
National Library for the Blind, Inc.,
Washington, D.C.
Perkins Institution Library, Watertown,
Massachusetts

The first book to be created as a result of Congress' funding of the Pratt-Smoot bill was Woodrow Wilson's *George Washington* to meet a demand resulting from the commemoration of the bicentennial of Washington's birth.

1932 was a banner year for the American blind not only because the "Books for the Blind" program got under way but because a uniform system of Braille—Standard English Braille—was established for all English-speaking countries and the development of the talking book and the talking book machine were begun.

Thus, at a time when all commercial phonograph records were played at 78 rpm, discs were developed for the blind to read at 33-1/3 rpm, allowing thirty minutes of reading time on each record. The first talking book machine had to be purchased by or for the blind individual at a cost of about sixty dollars. Later, a Works Progress Administration project to manufacture talking book machines was approved through the personal interest of President Roosevelt. Approximately 20,000 machines were distributed to blind persons as a result of this project. Blind people worked side by side with complete equality with their sighted neighbors constructing these talking book machines.

Among the titles chosen for the first orders of talking books were the Declaration of Independence; the Constitution of the United States; Washington's Farewell Address; Lincoln's Gettysburg Address; Shakespeare's *As You Like It*, *The Merchant of Venice*, and

Hamlet; Kipling's *Brushwood Boy*; and Wodehouse's *Very Good, Jeeves*.

The basic "Books for the Blind" act was amended several times, not only permitting increased appropriations, but by deleting the word "adult" on July 3, 1952, the way was paved to provide service to blind children. By the end of fiscal 1966, laws had been passed by Congress authorizing the library to provide to all persons who could not read because of any physical disability the same service it had been providing to individuals who could not read because of blindness. In 1963 talking books began to be recorded on ten-inch discs at the speed of 16-2/3 rpm, 45 minutes per side. 1973 saw the advent of the ten-inch 8-1/3 rpm, 85 minutes per side disc. The recording of books on cassette (3-3/4 ips) began in 1969.

1974 sees 53 regional libraries (most of the "newer" ones are parts of state libraries) and 81 subregional libraries. There are in operation two multicenters—Florida for the Southeastern states and Utah for the West—"To serve as a reservoir of and service point for lesser used books and as a development, coordination and storage center for volunteer production of reading materials to assist regional libraries in meeting needs peculiar to their quarter of the country."

As in the past, many regional libraries are augmenting their collections by themselves engineering the purchase and/or production of materials. Many states purchase large print books (or encourage public libraries to provide these on the local level), which are not provided through the Library of

Congress. Many regional libraries enrich and enhance their services through the purchase of commercial records and cassettes, and others make use of the resources of a number of volunteer and privately funded organizations which produce materials for the blind and physically handicapped. Some states have developed their own corps of volunteers who produce a great variety of Braille and tape books and magazines including items of local interest, materials for students, and

general library material. By working within the framework of the regional library system (using multicenters, using National Collections for interlibrary loan, and providing unput to the acquisition and distribution policies of the Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped) and by an imaginative use of local resources and other peripheral organizations, the regional library of 1974 works to meet the total library needs of its blind and physically handicapped patrons. □

SENATORS ASK ABOUT NAC

BY

JAMES GASHEL

On three recent occasions, in October and December of 1973 and again in May of 1974, groups of NFB members came to Washington, D.C. They met with their Representatives and Senators and, as constituents, informed them of how the organized blind feel toward NAC.

On June 10, 1974, during the Senate hearings on Labor-HEW Appropriations, under the section entitled "Phaseout of Grants," the Senate Appropriations Committee heard testimony concerning NAC funding.

On November 15, 1974, at a meeting between the NFB and NAC in Chicago, it became apparent that, in all likelihood, the Federal funding of NAC by HEW would be discontinued for fiscal year 1975.

The continuity of these events is no coincidence. Between the first meetings of blind constituents with congressional

leaders and the present situation, which promises NAC's future decline, are several people whose voices are now counted among those in support of the blind. Senator Edward W. Brooke (R-Massachusetts) and Senator Ted Stevens (R-Alaska) are two of these voices which have figured prominently in NFB's battle to have NAC funds cut off. Both members of the powerful Senate Appropriations Committee, Senators Brooke and Stevens were instrumental in obtaining from HEW documentation of the uses, nature, and extent of NAC funding and operations. Indeed, in their efforts to obtain more complete information, they asked probing questions demanding accountability from HEW:

Senator BROOKE. Will you furnish for the record the total amount of money spent in connection with this accreditation project? Include in this total the amount spent to support the Commission on Standards and Accreditation as well as the amount of money

spent to this date to support NAC. Also include the total amount of money in grants, gifts, or fees which COMSTAC and NAC have received to this date from all other sources. Please include the names of these sources along with the amounts of grants, gifts, and fees provided by each.

The response from HEW was enlightening, not only in respect to the nature of NAC's resources but in respect to their magnitude.

Dr. ADAMS. To date, the Social and Rehabilitation Service has granted a total of

\$746,000 to the accreditation effort of agencies serving the blind and visually handicapped. This total includes grants to COMSTAC, \$65,000, and NAC, \$681,000. If you will allow me at this point, I will insert in the record the following three tables which give a breakdown of income for COMSTAC for 1963-66, NAC for 1967-72, and income for NAC for 1973, naming sources for that year which exemplify sources for previous years. It should be noted that SRS awarded a grant to NAC for the calendar year 1974 in the amount of \$90,000. This amount is included in the total grant for NAC I mentioned. [The tables follow:]

Income for Commission on Standards and Accreditation 1963-66

SRS grant	\$ 65,000
American Foundation for the Blind	249,000
Given Foundation	50,000
Pfiffer Foundation	15,000
Rockefeller Brothers Fund	<u>50,000</u>
Total	\$429,000

National Accreditation Council Income for 1973

Individuals	\$ 10,526	small amounts from eighty individuals
Foundations	162,950	\$90,000 American Foundation for the Blind 30,000 Herman Goldman Foundation 10,000 Bingham Foundation 10,000 Concordia Foundation 22,500 advanced from AFB for 1974 450 small miscellaneous foundations
Corporations	3,275	from five corporations
Federal Government: HEW/RSA	90,203	
Associate Memberships	1,250	
Fees and Dues of Member Units of Accredited Agencies	21,714	
Federal Government: HEW/OE	1,836	for project to develop standards for production of reading materials. Includes \$336 carried forward from 1972 and spent in 1973.
Sales	2,224	
Interest	8,735	
Other	<u>1,374</u>	miscellaneous contributions
Total	\$304,087	

National Accreditation Council Income for 1967-1972

Source	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972
Contributions and other public support	\$ 80,000.00	\$ 88,532.14	\$ 98,367.44	\$ 75,732.38	\$107,085.00	\$116,002.90
Grants from Government agencies	79,000.00	80,824.46	91,052.00	118,815.45	118,200.00	109,500.00
Dues and other revenue	7,868.40	9,597.18	13,223.63	22,026.42	40,594.70	33,322.69
TOTAL	<u>\$166,868.40</u>	<u>\$178,953.78</u>	<u>\$202,643.07</u>	<u>\$216,574.25</u>	<u>\$265,879.70</u>	<u>\$258,825.59</u>
Less supports and grants limited by donors or grantors			38,668.35	21,477.45	21,010.00	9,500.00
Support and revenue available to finance general activities			<u>\$163,974.72</u>	<u>\$195,096.80</u>	<u>\$244,869.70</u>	<u>\$249,325.59</u>

The Senators' concern with accountability was further demonstrated by several other questions aimed at determining whether the granting of Federal funds to schools and agencies serving the blind is in any way related to NAC accreditation:

Senator BROOKE. Are there any plans to condition Federal funding participation on NAC's accreditation? If there are, justify this delegation of your authority to a private group. If this does not represent your department's policy, will you officially inform those programs with which you work that the NAC accreditation is not required by SRS?

Dr. ADAMS. SRS has never published any regulations regarding mandatory accreditation, nor does it intend to do so.

The vocational rehabilitation program is administered by state agencies and therefore only the state agencies have the right to develop standards for purchase of services. However, the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR) adopted a resolution on September 26, 1972, which was reaffirmed at a subsequent meeting, commending the National Accreditation Council and the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) on their standards. The CSAVR urged the states to give serious consideration to these standards in their efforts to improve services to disabled persons. Action with respect to this resolution, however, is solely a state prerogative.

The CSAVR has no jurisdiction over state agency operations nor did they intend this resolution to be misconstrued as a mandate. The resolution grew out of a series of discussions regarding the upgrading of services to clients.

Senator BROOKE. What steps is your department taking to assure this committee that observers representing the blind will be furnished with all documents, minutes, and

other related materials being approved and discussed? Can you assure this committee that representatives of the National Federation of the Blind will be provided with copies of all minutes and documents being considered so that meaningful observation can occur?

Dr. ADAMS. The Board of Directors of the National Accreditation Council in their meeting May 31, 1974, adopted a motion making copies of all its minutes to date and all subsequent minutes available on request to all members and sponsors, and, at cost, on request to any other persons who may request them. The resolution on openness of board meetings, herewith submitted for the record, was further amended to take care of an oversight—inadvertently, the corporate members and sponsors were not included among those who are invited to attend every board meeting, and the revised resolution now includes them:

*Resolution adopted at
Board of Directors Meeting
December 13, 1973, New York, New York*

WHEREAS the National Accreditation Council's primary constituency is made up of those agencies which are fully participating members of the Council; and

WHEREAS Annual Meetings of the Council are open; and

WHEREAS the National Accreditation Council maintains a permanent staff, which includes among its responsibilities that of affording a channel to the Board for all responsible communications from individuals or groups who have valid business to transact with the Board; and

WHEREAS officers and members of the Board are widely dispersed in the Nation, and direct access to them is

easy for any communication validly related to the function of the National Accreditation Council; and

WHEREAS staff and Board, alike, are expected to transmit communications related to or affecting the business of the National Accreditation Council; and

WHEREAS the approved Board minutes are available for inspection by members of the Council during regular business hours: Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of the National Accreditation Council hereby adopts a general policy of openness which encourages input by individuals or groups who have a determinable interest in the welfare of blind persons as it may be affected by the National Accreditation Council; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a representative of any national organization concerned with services for blind and visually handicapped persons is welcome as an observer at any NAC Board of Directors meeting except executive sessions and that every reasonable consideration be given to requests for special purpose appearances at or presentation to meetings of the Board of Directors—in either case provided only that reasonable advance notice is given of the desire to attend so adequate accommodations may be provided.

Under the section entitled "Opportunity for the Blind," the questions stress the necessity of SRS responsiveness to the blind consumer in respect to NAC standards:

Senator BROOKE. Can you assure this committee that SRS will take affirmative action to secure a more realistic and equitable opportunity for the blind to participate in this standard revision and review? What specific steps will you take to insure the revision of NAC's standards is representative in character?

Dr. ADAMS. Even though accreditation is a voluntary process, the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare would not approve standards that were developed for the purpose of serving any segment of the population if the opinions of those being served were excluded from the development or revision of such standards.

In a meeting with the National Federation of the Blind's Washington Representative, we pointed out that invitations had been issued by NAC to NFB, and urged them to accept the invitations and participate in the standards revisional procedure and thereby recommend the changes they wish to see incorporated. At the same time, we have already transmitted our recommendations to NAC officials. We shall continue to urge that adequate consumer representation be invited to participate in all stages of standards development and revision.

While we certainly recognize that NFB represents a significant number of blind persons, 10.5 percent of the total population of 475,200 as estimated by the National Society for the Prevention of Blindness, SRS is obligated to give consideration to other viewpoints.

There are, as you know, two additional national consumer organizations of blind persons: the American Council of the Blind and the Blind Veterans Association. However, the vast majority of blind persons in the United States are not members of any of the three organizations, and they may or may not choose to be represented by any one organization. We, of course, respect their right of choice.

Senator BROOKE. Were these facts taken into account during the process of renewing

NAC's grant? If so, what justification can there be for renewing such grants before making an objective determination that each of these serious weaknesses has been cleared up? Would it not have been better for you to take positive action toward resolving these problems by joining with the Congress and saying to NAC that continuation of this grant carries with it the responsibility of being truly responsive to the blind themselves as well as to the professionals in the field of work with the blind?

Dr. ADAMS. In accordance with SRS policy, NAC submitted a progress report and continuation application for a grant in the fall of 1973. The fiscal year for that organization is the same as the calendar year. So there would be no gap in the project effort, it was necessary for us to make both a careful review of NAC's progress as well as a decision on continued funding before the grant award commenced on January 1, 1974. The question of continuing our grant to NAC was discussed with the General Accounting Office at the time the application was being reviewed. Approval of that application was fully within the responsibility of SRS.

Both the Office of Education and the Social and Rehabilitation Service have made special efforts to evaluate NAC's performance, and from all indications that organization is carrying out its commitments in accordance with departmental requirements. OE will continue its recognition of NAC until December 1975 when the advisory committee will again review NAC for continued recognition. SRS has funded NAC for the calendar year of 1974.

We want to assure this committee that SRS and RSA are deeply interested in NFB and NAC getting together and resolving their differences. We will do our utmost to encourage such a meeting and are prepared to lend our good offices in finding an equitable solution for all concerned.

Senator STEVENS. How much money has SRS provided to the National Accreditation Council for Agencies Serving the Blind and Visually Handicapped in the past two years?

Dr. ADAMS. During the past two years, SRS has awarded NAC a total of \$180,203. Grants were as follows: January 1, 1973, to December 31, 1973—\$90,203; January 1, 1974, to December 31, 1974—\$90,000.

Senator STEVENS. While the NAC Board of Directors contains eleven blind persons, I understand that these people are not selected by the blind to represent them. Many Federal programs require consumer representation on administrative boards. Does SRS have such a requirement?

Dr. ADAMS. NAC is a nonprofit organization; therefore, SRS does not exercise control with respect to board membership. We have, however, encouraged NAC to elect a substantial number of blind persons to the board (at present, eleven out of thirty).

The board of directors is authorized by the bylaws to appoint committees including the nominations committee. The board generally delegates this responsibility to the president.

The nominations committee seeks suggestions from inside and outside the organization. It welcomes and considers unsolicited suggestions from any individual or organization. In order to serve on the board, nominees obviously must agree to become corporate members.

Senator STEVENS. Is accreditation by NAC required before other agencies serving the blind receive Federal funding?

Dr. ADAMS. No, accreditation is a voluntary process. HEW has never required accreditation as a prerequisite for funding and has no intention of doing so.

Standard setting for purchase of services is the prerogative of each state agency.

Throughout the hearings, Dr. Adams, Commissioner of Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), appeared to take the administration line and offered little in the way of actual commitment. It should

be noted, however, that these hearings occurred only one month after Dr. Adams had assumed his position as Commissioner, which perhaps explains his reliance upon the Office for the Blind. It is of further significance that the above testimony was presented before Dr. Adams attended the 1974 NFB National Convention in Chicago. Since that time, Dr. Adams has become increasingly responsive to the needs of the blind and has shown a continued desire to work with the leaders of the organized blind in the formulation of policy.

The questions posed by Senator Brooke and Senator Stevens are evidence of their strong support for the blind of this country. The active and responsible role which these two Senators took with respect to NAC is a direct result of meetings with NFB members. That Senator Brooke and Senator Stevens have chosen to work affirmatively with the NFB shows a high degree of responsiveness to constituent needs and it demonstrates the importance of individuals working collectively to affect change. □

JOHNSON COUNTY GEARS KANSAS UP FOR ACTION

BY

JERRY DAL PORTO

Hit 'em quick and hard is the game plan used on their State legislators by the Johnson County, Kansas, chapter of the NFB. In line with this, they hosted nine members of the Kansas House of Representatives and one State senator at their second annual Legislative Dinner on December 7th.

Invitations went out shortly after the November election to a dozen representatives and three State senators, along with the Governor-elect and Members of Congress from this area. The program was planned after the election but before the legislative session began in order to get the maximum of participation and the optimum of effect.

The guest list included State Senator Jan Myers, along with Representatives Wendall Lady, 19th District; Arthur Douville, 20th District; Robert McCrum, 21st District; Victor Kearns, 23d District; Earl Ward, 25th District; Edgar Moore, 26th District; James Yonally, 29th District; August

Bogina, 30th District; and Fred Roseneau of the 39th Legislative District.

The program, hosted by Johnson County president Ken Tiede, featured brief talks by Linda Carpenter and Susie Lane, products of the chapter speakers program, and State president Dick Edlund. The two women, both officers on the newly elected board, discussed particular problems they had encountered with the State training program, and touched on the fact that there might be a better way to go. Then the heavy artillery, Dick Edlund, drove the shots home explaining that an independent commission rather than the umbrella system would give better service at less cost to the taxpayers of the State. A question-and-answer session was handled by master of ceremonies Jerry Dal Porto of a local television station.

The dinner and formal program were preceded and followed by periods of fellowship and discussion with Federation

members and the legislators exchanging thoughts and ideas. Comments from the lawmakers indicated that they felt completely at ease with the attitudes displayed by the Federationists and were impressed with the frank and open discussion of the issues of custodialism and the well-thought-out presentation of Federation goals.

At the close of the evening, virtually all of the legislators had pledged to add their names to the list of sponsors of legislation concerning the change in the State organization of programs for the blind and promised to give grave consideration to any matter that crosses their desks concerning the blind of Kansas.

In addition to the insights given the legislators, the chapter gleaned some valuable information that will help us place our shots where they will do the most good. For example: Representative McCrum's father-in-law was blind for several years and he has an appreciation of the problems and goals of the NFB, and Representative Kearns has a son with a visual impairment who faces many of the same problems as the blind.

In all, the \$130 tab for the dinner was a small price to pay for gaining this kind of support for our programs and ideas and will remain a part of the ongoing program of the Johnson County Chapter of the NFB of Kansas. □

REHABILITATION CENTERS FOR THE BLIND: WHAT ARE THEY, AND WHAT SHOULD THEY DO?

BY

MANUEL URENA

Centers for the blind emerged in this country approximately a century ago. Their advent was a logical extension of the asylum and county home system that, during the era, epitomized the fruits of charity for the visually impaired. Historically, centers for the visually disabled evolved along two distinctive paths: recreational-shelter and the more modern phenomenon, rehabilitation-orientation. More recently a number of facilities are attempting to represent themselves as "total" facilities for the blind, embracing all the aforementioned activities. The Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind, and the Minneapolis Society for the Blind are probably most notable in this category. It should be clear from the outset that the organized blind view the commingling of these two distinctive types

of institutions ("recreational-shelter" and "rehabilitation-orientation") as incompatible.

It may be that in a few isolated instances sheltered workshops or recreational centers would need the availability of orientation services—mobility or communication skills—but these should be offered on an ad hoc basis to workers or patrons of these institutions. Rehabilitation agencies should seek orientation services from centers that offer a comprehensive array of services. Rehabilitation clients should be initially referred to an orientation facility and should be referred to sheltered workshops for terminal employment only after a clear determination has been made indicating that competitive employment is out of the question. Initial referral to a facility that

commingles workshop and rehabilitation activities more often than not creates candidates for substandard employment and serves as a terminus for all hope.

Best estimates would lead to the conclusion that somewhere in the neighborhood of 260 centers are today operating throughout the country. It is probably a safe assumption that less than a fifth of these institutions may be classified as solely rehabilitative in nature. The remaining 200-plus may have elements of rehabilitation, but these "lighthouses" are principally preoccupied with terminal sheltered employment and recreation activities.

The origins of the orientation-adjustment centers in this country have their roots in the creation by the Federal Government of facilities for blinded veterans of the two World Wars. Evergreen, in Baltimore, existed as a training center from 1918 to 1925. After World War II, the old Farmers' Convalescent Hospital at Avon, Connecticut, was converted into a facility for the new crop of blinded veterans. Two years later activities were terminated there and transferred to the Veterans Hospital at Hines, Illinois.

Governmental rehabilitation centers for the civilian population began in earnest in 1945. By 1951, not surprisingly, the American Foundation for the Blind had adopted a posture of "step-parental" concern over the nature and function of these facilities; and together with the Federal Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, arranged for the Spring-Mill Conference for personnel from the various centers for the purpose of arriving at "as much unanimity as possible on optimum procedures and techniques." The next five

years predictably saw an increased effort to make the centers across the land adopt a uniform regimen. Because of the variety and modus operandi of various centers, the American Foundation for the Blind and the Federal Office of Vocational Rehabilitation sponsored another national meeting, the New Orleans seminar in 1956. This seminar produced the identification of four basic areas of services offered by rehabilitation centers: (1) medical; (2) psychological; (3) social; and (4) vocational. The voice of the consumer, the organized blind, was conspicuously absent from all these gatherings. Certainly, if the blind had been present, at the very minimum there would have been an effort to rearrange the priority of services. It may be argued that these meetings occurred during the fifties, antedating the national awareness of consumerism. However true this may be for others, the blind have had a collective voice since 1940.

To a greater or lesser extent, these conferences underlined and spotlighted three striking characteristics in the heritage of center development. Firstly, of course, is the fact that the facilities for blinded veterans have always been hospital-based or connected. In the beginning it was easier to secure construction funds through Federal grants for medical purposes. Secondly, one is confronted constantly with a demand throughout the series of seminars and workshops with the incessant determination to create uniform standards. The only substantive deviation from this point of departure is the third striking characteristic. The report of the New Orleans conference held as one of its fundamental concepts, "The social climate provided by the staff of such a center is a fundamental aspect of the rehabilitation process, specially in affecting attitudinal

change, not only on the part of the trainee, but also of his family and of the community into which the trainee will proceed when the reorganization period is completed."

This comment reflects a belief that the real handicap of blindness lies not in overcoming the physical disability—through the learning of endless skills—but rather in constructive attitudinal changes of the blind person and those around him. Increasingly in recent years this approach has been sacrificed on the altar of so-called "professional growth." Rather than use the statement of the New Orleans seminar, contemporary rehabilitation practitioners maintain that the center primarily "provides a combination of services in one setting, resulting in a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts, and the dynamics of which result from the constant interplay between clients, clients and staff, and various professional disciplines around the needs of the clients." These two concepts placed in close juxtaposition pinpoint the contending theories concerning center operation.

With accelerating rapidity, centers have moved in the direction of the latter concept. The abandonment of the approach that emanated from the New Orleans seminar had the predictable impact. Soon after the adoption of the new "scientific" concept, a sharp proliferation of experts appeared. Psychologists, consulting psychiatrists, occupational therapists, nurses, and, most recently, chaplains, all became part of the center scene. The task of this labyrinth of specialists was to apply the multidisciplinary staffing technique which would theoretically enable trainees to profit from exposure to experts in all related fields.

Accordingly, with smothering impact, center staffs have become swollen with employees having prestigious-sounding titles—"peripatologists" to teach cane travel; "social workers" to give rudimentary instructions in grooming; "recreational directors" to devise simple social activities; and "therapists" to soothe the supposedly anxiety-filled clients. These cadres of experts, it is felt, impart an aura of mystery and complexity to work with the blind in the public mind. Many workers feel that this development should be encouraged for it lends more respectability, acceptability, and status to the profession.

The impetus toward conformity and uniformity continues unabated. In 1971, the American Foundation for the Blind published *A Step-by-Step Guide to Personal Management for Blind Persons*. Additionally, there have been other publications of various lengths regarding working with the blind on such subjects as swimming, the tying of neckties, and, of course, mobility. These manuals and monographs, after an inconsequential disclaimer, give very specific instruction in teaching the blind how to cope with the simplest and most rudimentary activities. Centers are increasingly utilizing these publications as basic texts and guidelines for staff in aiding the blind to adjust.

For the most part, the blind regard these developments as at best, ludicrous and irrelevant, and at worst, insidiously detrimental. Since the blind represent a cross-section of the population, all attempts to standardize them will fail. Therefore, rehabilitation facilities must have flexibility to deal with local conditions and special client needs. Standards such as those proposed by the National Accreditation Council for

Agencies Serving the Blind and Visually Handicapped (NAC) and by many "professional" workers in the field push toward uniformity of technique in dealing with clients and esoteric criteria in staff hiring policies. The inevitable result is to make work for the blind a permanent, private reserve for graduates with special degrees in work for the blind.

Contrary to all of this, the principal task of the center should be to provide the client with a notion that he or she is still first and foremost a full human being with infinite potential and with the rights and privileges normally accorded to first-class citizens. In order to instill this self-confidence, centers must concentrate in working with clients to the end that they will approach future problems with the capacity and imagination to solve them. Standards which concentrate on telling clients how to take a bath or applaud will not achieve this objective.

Rehabilitation of the blind in its truest sense means the restoration of the individual to the highest potential of self-sufficiency of which he is capable, with the goal of complete integration into the community. To achieve this aim, centers for the blind should gear their programs so as to provide the philosophy and those opportunities and services designed to assist their blind clients to attain physical, social, and economic adjustment. Specifically, this involves the following fourteen principles:

1. The center, to be relevant, must identify needs. There are two central ones: (a) the physical disability, requiring kinds of physical adjustment to be made; (b) the social handicap, requiring attitudinal concepts about blindness which will lead to rejection of traditional stereotypes. A

center will fail to deal with these twin objectives unless it gives recognition to them and resolves them satisfactorily.

Blindness is no respecter of persons. Blind people are not specifically selected for good or evil; rather, blindness is something which occurs at random, striking the just and the unjust, the rich and the poor, the young and the old, the genius and the imbecile, but for the most part, it occurs to just ordinary people. It is something which, by definition, strips individuals of eyesight but not of humanity, for the blind person basically is the same person after blindness as before, having the same talents, aspirations, feelings, and drives; in short, possessing all those qualities all human beings possess in common and, at the same time, retaining those characteristics and quirks which make each of us indistinguishable as an individual.

In other words, the blind are *people*. They have every kind of need and difficulty that one ordinarily finds among ordinary people, and, in addition, there are some problems which arise from blindness which require special attention. These problems basically are of two kinds, physical and social. The physical problems of blindness relate to the deficiency in, or lack of, visual acuity. Since every phase of living is centered around eyesight, the blind person necessarily must make a number of adjustments in his mode of living. Today these changes are well systematized and readily taught. They consist of such things as Braille, typing, travel training, et cetera. With these, the loss of sight is no longer an overwhelming loss but rather one which can largely be offset.

In addition to the physical aspects of blindness, there is a sociological one which

is at once subtle and more serious. This problem is not a direct consequence of the loss of sight. It is not inherent in blindness, but rather is a consequence of the attitudes, beliefs, superstitions, and misconceptions which people generally hold about the meaning of blindness. Namely, that blindness is far more than a loss of sight; that it is the loss of mobility, intelligence, and emotional stability, that the blind person is doomed to live out his days in idleness, loneliness, and dependency. To overcome this phase of blindness, training alone is not enough. There must be stimulation and encouragement of the blind individual so that he overcomes the image of the helpless blind man and substitutes in its stead a new and constructive self-image in which he pictures himself as a human being in the full sense of the word. Once this is accomplished, he will be able to hold his head high. He will be capable of meeting and assisting in overcoming the obstacles that have been placed in his way and thus go on and make for himself a full and rewarding life.

2. Self-organization and collective action have been the tools of accomplishment. Acting in an organized fashion, the blind have gained not only social progress for themselves but have also benefited through mutual support. Accordingly, centers should actively encourage and promote organizations of the blind, for the blind, and by the blind, as the most effective means of achieving relevant solutions to problems of sightlessness. This plan can be implemented by indicating the wisdom to blind clients of becoming affiliated with independent organizations of the blind. It is highly desirable, if not essential to the achievement of these purposes, that the staff members in such centers demonstrate

their interest in and knowledge of the problems of the blind by their participation in the organized blind movement.

3. Staff and board positions should be completely open to qualified blind persons. Sightless individuals, because of their keen interest and special knowledge of the problems incident to blindness, could fill these posts with distinction. If the policy-making machinery of a center is vested in a board of directors, a majority of the directors should be visually handicapped persons and a significant number of these should be the elected representatives of the blind. In instances where center policy is determined within a governmental agency, at least one of the two major administrative posts should be filled by blind individuals. A sizable proportion of the paid staff should be comprised of blind persons.

4. Centers should actively encourage and assist clients to broaden their social contacts by joining other groups, as well as pursuing economic interests in the larger community. The maximum degree of mobility attainable is extremely helpful in this connection.

5. Centers should maintain a rich program of educational and avocational courses, including but not limited to, mobility training, Braille, typing, industrial arts and personal adjustment. For exactly the same reason that it would not be wise to teach shoeshining in a rehabilitation center for blacks or bartending in an institution for alcoholics, stereotyped activities for the blind should be strictly prohibited. These activities would include broom and brush making as well as rug weaving and leather lacing. In general, the skills and curriculum offered by the center

should have the primary objective of enhancing the problem-solving ability of the clients, making it possible to deal with inevitable difficulties that will emerge during the rest of life. Strict conformity to attendance and curriculum should not necessarily be the true measure of progress.

6. All activities of the center should be conducted in a manner that will actively foster the independence and self-determination of the blind. Often clients referred to rehabilitation centers lack self-confidence and possess the self-image of a second-class citizen. The individual may have low expectations regarding employment and social acceptance. Therefore, if a center includes a workshop, or is housed in close proximity to one, the client is confirmed in these ideas. The inescapable result is that the majority of clients will conform and leave the center full of bitterness, requiring shelter for the rest of their lives. It becomes an indisputable fact that if the center is to achieve the goals of fostering independence and self-determination, there can be no commingling of its functions with workshops or similar facilities, whatever value these institutions may have in their own right.

7. Location of the center should be in an urban setting with ready accessibility to social and medical services. It is important to have the availability of medical services rather than to have these services incorporated into the facility. It should be remembered that clients are in the center to learn how to cope with blindness, not to overcome some ailment. The center would be well served to be near a university, churches, library, industry, eating establishments, civic group activity, shopping of all sorts, mass transit, and

cultural and entertainment locations. The proximity to as many of these facilities as is possible will encourage clients to be abroad in the land. This will in turn assist with integration and the entire adjustment process.

8. The center staff should offer a breadth of background, experience, and education. The aim should be to give clients exposure to variety. The staff should have the capacity to cope with diversity of intelligence, possess flexibility, and above all, believe in the capability, social adaptability, and normality of the blind. Centers should avoid loading the staff with highly specialized training, particularly in work for the blind—no preference should be given to those with special degrees in work for the blind.

9. The center should be small and intimate, from twenty to twenty-five clients with six or seven teachers. The center population should never exceed thirty; a ratio of one instructor for every three or four clients is desirable. The present attempt to establish one-to-one, or in some instances, more than one instructor per client, is a needless and undesirable expense. In mobility it can be detrimental. The client who knows that someone is always near to bail him or her out of difficulties will hardly be encouraged to rely upon his or her skills and competence. Better to have one teacher with three or four clients and make clients realize that they cannot always be watched and therefore must depend upon their own resources. It should be remembered that increasing the population in attendance while maintaining the desired ratio of staff to students will depersonalize the center and make it impossible to accomplish its objectives.

10. The intake policy should guarantee the right of anyone to apply. Screening should be done by appropriate center staff, and clients should be admitted on a staggered basis. This procedure will permit the more advanced clients to render invaluable assistance to newer arrivals. Length of stay should be from six to seven months or for as long as necessary, but rarely over one year. There should be an open meal policy, meaning that clients should eat a sizable number of their meals out of the facility in public restaurants in the community.

11. There should be regular written (probably monthly) reports for each student from each of the student's teachers. These reports should contain specific information concerning the level of certain skills: Braille, typing, mobility, et cetera. These should be commentary concerning the progress of the students regarding attitudes about blindness and ability to work with staff and other center clients. Reports need not be more than two pages in length and should reflect the observations and views of the instructor. The objective is to secure the point of view of the teacher about the status of a client. It is not to reach a consensus; therefore, reports should be prepared without consultation. This requirement only refers to the reports; it is not to be construed to prohibit necessary exchanges of information about clients among the staff. In this connection, "staffing" is a much overused tool to be regarded with caution. Generally speaking, a consensus is reached reflecting the views of the strongest personalities in the staff. An even greater problem is the failure of staff to assume individual responsibility when collective decisions are reached.

12. It should be kept in mind that these centers are for adults and the residence dormitories should be operated in accordance with this fact—adult behavior

warrants mature treatment. The center cannot serve *in loco parentis*—checkouts, passes, locked outer doors without keys for residents, et cetera. It will be observed that this procedure may entail risks but it is impossible to achieve maturity and independence without hazard.

13. The center's program and operation should be reviewed by the alumni organization, if one exists, by the organized blind, or the blind generally. Any major changes in policy should be taken only after consulting with the local independent organized blind.

14. It goes without saying that the facility should be commodious, comfortable, inviting, and physically adequate. The center should avoid any semblance, in practice or appearance, of custodialism.

Much tangible progress has been accomplished in a generation. This advancement into a wide variety of jobs and callings largely is attributable to the efforts of blind people who have challenged the common misconceptions of laymen and professionals alike regarding the role of the visually disabled in present-day society. As the experience of the last thirty years amply demonstrates, the preoccupation with pseudo-scientific staffing techniques has not ameliorated appreciably the plight of the blind. Quite the contrary, because of the high esteem of the ordinary person concerning the man with the degree or with a sophisticated prefix attached to his name, the burdens of the blind have been significantly augmented. The idea that research by committee or treatment by counseling teams—ten men always being accounted better than one and the responsibility (or should one say irresponsibility?) sprayed liberally about like the credit list in a Hollywood film—is standard operating procedure in rehabilitation centers across the land.

Only with the blind having a strong voice in policy determination will centers be able to achieve the primary objective of restoring the sightless to full participation in society. Unless this original grand design can be recaptured, the prevailing fetish about professionalism and the obsession with creating a "science" of rehabilitation, plus the propensity to utilize the so-called multidiscipline staffing technique can only lead to the abyss of non-science and the full imposition of technocracy.

Like John Stuart Mill a century ago, the blind worry about what is happening to the individual—the supposed beneficiary but possible victim of an advancing technology

in a society ever more organized, institutionalized and standardized. It appears that in our century mass manipulation is a greater danger to the individual than economic exploitation ever was in former times. In the words of Adlai Stevenson, "Government and industry must find new and better ways of restoring scope to that strange eccentric, the individual." This admonition applies with equal force to blind Americans. As recipients of many governmental services, the blind are keenly aware of the tragic development to standardize individuals. With increasing vigor the blind strive to make rehabilitation a meaningful reality instead of a hope deferred. □

IT TAKES ALL KINDS . . .

BY

HAZEL STALEY

[From the NFB of North Carolina *Newsletter*.]

On Sunday morning during the closing session of our convention in September, we were shocked and outraged to learn that a group of people were down in front of the hotel making a movie about a blind beggar. Our first vice president took the chair, and Jim Gashel, our National Representative, and I went down to investigate. The people were very rude and outright hostile to us. I did learn from one of them, however, that the name of the company was Frederick Productions, that the owner was Frederick Fridell (he spelled it that way for me), and that it was located in Charlotte. I said that I would be in touch with them later and returned to the convention hall.

The next morning I checked the telephone directory and found only one listing under Fridell, a monument

company. I called the Better Business Bureau, the city and State licensing departments, the city manager's office, the Chamber of Commerce, the police department, Warner Brothers Studio, the hotel, and checked the city directory, but could find no trace of the company. Finally, just on an outside chance that they might know something, I called the monument company. The lady I talked with had heard of Frederick Fridell, but said that his name was spelled Friedel. I called the number she gave me. When the person who answered learned who I was, she said that Mr. Friedel was not in. I got the address of the company, 1501 Ivy Drive, and left my number so that Mr. Friedel could return my call. When I had not heard from him by five o'clock that afternoon, I called again and was told that

he had not come in. I called the next morning at eight-thirty, thinking that I would catch him before he left the office. The person who answered (a different voice this time) said that this was Mr. Friedel's residence and that he had gone for the day. I asked if his business was in his home and she said that it was; so apparently it is a very small operation.

On Tuesday evening, October 8, I again called Mr. Friedel and he himself answered. He made no comment when I said that I had left my number three times and he had not returned my call, but was very cordial otherwise. I explained that we were trying very hard to dispel from the public mind the image of the blind as beggars and that we felt that a movie such as his would tear down all that we were doing. He said that the person in the movie wasn't *really* blind, that he was just pretending to be blind in order to catch a criminal in the act of committing a crime. He seemed to make

some fine distinction here. I argued that it made no difference, that it reinforced the image just the same. I suggested that if he wanted to use a blind person, he might show a blind housewife going out to do her shopping or a blind businessman on his way to work. I offered to help rewrite the script so as to incorporate these ideas. He replied that this would be up to the editors. I asked how wide a showing the movie would have. At this point he became rather evasive. He said that it was a low-budget production and would probably be seen only in a few areas of the Carolinas. I said that we were prepared to take legal action if necessary to prevent the use of this particular scene. He said that he would recommend to the editors that it be changed or deleted entirely. I have come to believe that the operation is too small to worry about and that no further action will be necessary. I believe we have made our point and that the scene will be deleted. □

THE CANE IS A SYMBOL OF INDEPENDENCE

BY

MARYANN COSATINO

[Reprinted with permission from the Chicago (Illinois) *Daily News*.]

What thoughts go through your mind when you see a blind person using a cane? It may be while riding a bus, walking down a street, shopping in a department store. You, of course, have your own business to attend to, but did you ever think that that blind person also has his or her own business to attend to? You may be feeling happy or sad, enjoying your job or chore, or dreading it immensely. Did you ever consider that many of the same thoughts are going to occur to your blind counterpart? You have to make certain

preparations before embarking on any trip. Did you ever think that the blind person did, too? You know you have freedom, you are self-sufficient, and you know what you're about. Do you ever think those same thoughts about that blind person you see, or do the clichés of pity, misunderstanding, and sympathy jargonize themselves within your consciousness?

I have used a cane since I was thirteen. Much of the time I used it with shame, groping, and fear. Disgust filled my inner

being when I tripped down a step, crossed a street crookedly, or groped for the coin box on the CTA bus. I knew from Moment One that I was different, branded with a four-foot-long mark that indubitably said, "The bearer of me is *blind*, and whatever else you (meaning you the reader) will make of him."

I encounter people all of the time who bless me, extol my "independence," call me "brave and courageous," and thoroughly "miss the boat" as to what the real significance of a cane is. I am perhaps best characterized as an average or less traveler. Give me familiar stores, streets, buildings to deal with and I'm OK. Put me in a new environment and I'm the floundering, groping, poor, blind stereotype you have made me out to be.

Yet, consider how well you as a sighted person do the first time in a new set of circumstances. Your advantage is, of course, your eyes—to read street signs, elevator listings, room numbers, and names on doors. Because I don't see, much of that technique is lost to me. But this does not, and must not, degrade or mar me as an individual. Consider, perhaps, how well you'd do going into a building for the first time with your eyes closed. You'd flounder, grope, act blindly, and not because you're stupid or inept, but simply because these circumstances were unfamiliar to you.

Perhaps much of this sounds crude, self-pitying, or malicious to you. But consider the amount of "talking" any blind

person must do to himself before embarking on any new experience. Consider that all of the stereotypes you know we also know. Consider the embarrassment felt by a blind person when, while trying to impress the "normal, sighted" person, he misses the chair and sits on the end of a small table in a room. Any impressions or assertions of independence are lost, fully known to us the blind.

When I first used my cane, I remembered realizing the noise it made, different and distinct from mine and others' steps, this tap-tap-tapping of my cane. Now I know that tapping saves me from holes, curbs, and buildings, but do you? I used to fold up my cane as soon as I sat down on my seat on the bus, ashamed to admit to being blind, unwilling to let sighted people share in my identity. Why? Because all children know from the earliest days of playing with neighbor kids that being "different" is a disaster, a crime, an outcasting shadow.

Blind people are "different," but not in the way you the "seeing" have cast us. We are different because we have a drive unknown to you. We continue to travel, despite all of the misconceptions, blunders, poorly thought out comments. We are different because our independence is of a character many of you will never be able to understand or experience. But, most of all, we are "different" because we use a cane. We were taught that a cane is "an extension of the index finger." We know the real "independence" a cane can afford to a blind traveler, worker, student, or mother. Do you? □

RAPID READING: PRO'S AND CON'S

NFB TEACHERS DIVISION
OFFERS COURSE

To all state and chapter presidents:

The Teachers Division will be sponsoring a workshop directed by Dr. Vearl McBride on "Rapid Braille Reading" to be held from July 21 to July 31, 1975, in Des Moines, Iowa. President Jernigan has generously offered us the facilities of the NFB at the Randolph Hotel Building.

Dr. McBride claims to be able to greatly improve one's Braille reading speed. Needless to say, his Braille reading theories are most controversial. However, I believe that, especially at this time, Federationists must do all that we can to promote Braille. It seems that wherever I turn, Braille is being placed on the defensive by those who would replace it with numerous gimmicks and gadgetry.

The price of the course is \$150 per person. If you would like to participate in this summer workshop in Des Moines, please send me a check for twenty dollars, in order to hold your place in the class, by no later than April 1, 1975. The remaining \$130 must be sent in by no later than May 1. Should you cancel out after June 15, we can guarantee the return of your money only if we are still above the minimum number of participants needed. In order to have the workshop, we must have a minimum of twelve people enrolled in the course and a maximum of twenty.

Please make all checks payable to Robert Acosta and send them to Robert Acosta, 20734C Devonshire Street, Chatsworth, California 91311. If you are interested, please act quickly by sending your deposit to the above address.

To those who enroll in the course, we shall send further registration information which will include special hotel rates which the NFB is working on at this time.

Cordially,

ROBERT ACOSTA,
President, NFB Teachers Division.

DON OCKEN WRITES ROBERT ACOSTA

DEAR BOB: Mrs. Anderson indicated that you are enthusiastic about Braille speed reading and that you would like the NFB to sponsor a workshop in this area next summer in Des Moines. I attended the two-week workshop along with fifteen others from around the country in Canton, Missouri, last summer. When I started telling Mrs. Anderson about how I felt, she suggested that I write to you, explaining in as much detail as possible what Braille speed reading appears (at least, to me) to be. Frankly and briefly, I don't think there is such a thing as Braille speed reading at the present time; whether or not Braille speed reading is a possibility is another question. I would like to make two other points before I relate my experiences: (1) What is now known as Braille speed reading should be evaluated in view of the claims that have been made for it; and (2) the course may have considerably helped some people, and very likely because they were not taught Braille by a good teacher or had to teach themselves.

You may want to know a little about me. I met you briefly at the NFB Convention in Minneapolis. I was a grade ahead of your wife at the school for the blind in Vinton, Iowa. I have a bachelor's degree in economics from the University of Iowa and a master's in management information systems from the University of Minnesota. I have been a programmer for two-and-

one-half years for the State of Iowa in Des Moines.

I was very enthusiastic about Braille speed reading myself. Ever since I first heard about their workshop at Brigham Young University, I looked forward to taking the course, and when I was accepted for last summer's workshop, I felt fortunate and expected this to be a very important thing in my life. I took two weeks off and paid for the course myself (for whatever that may be worth to you as information, which may be nothing). There were fourteen other students (including Martha Pamperin from California, who is also a member of the NFB Teachers Division) plus a woman who is working on a Ph. D. at the University of North Dakota (Grand Forks), who was an observer and who intends to write her dissertation on Braille speed reading. All of us had degrees except two women who were college students. Most of the other students are teachers of some kind—rehab teachers, Braille teachers, public school teachers, and resource teachers. As a group, we were not below average in any way.

The originator of Braille speed reading (sometimes called "rapid reading") is Dr. Vearl G. McBride, "Professor of Education; B.A. in Education, 1941; M.S. 1948, Arizona State University; Ph.D., 1959, University of Virginia, 1967—" (source: Culver-Stockton College Catalog). He teaches at Culver-Stockton, a small college in Canton, Missouri. It was difficult to believe that such a phenomenal thing as Braille speed reading could come from such an obscure place, and that tendency to disbelieve may well prove to be warranted.

As you might guess, Dr. McBride is not an evil man and does not, as far as I know,

intend any harm to anyone. Yes, he is a "nice guy," but so are, I believe, guys like Dan Robinson, Uncle Bob, Uncle Reese, Peter Salmon, et cetera. I don't know if he is trying to fool us or if he had originally fooled himself and honestly believes in what he is doing. I am convinced (and acknowledge that I may be wrong) that he teaches skimming, calls it speed reading, has the students believing they are speed reading, and then receives favorable publicity, sometimes even from students themselves. As a blind college-instructor friend of mine said, "He has the course stacked in his favor." He has already held at least nine workshops in at least six states, and more are scheduled, including one in England. Braille speed reading is already accepted as a proven fact of life, but it hasn't been proven. I have heard nothing against this course and this is hard to understand since it is so obviously overrated. I should qualify the last sentence by saying that the observer from North Dakota, Myrna Olson, is expected to reach conclusions unfavorable to the course but will probably not, in my opinion, be as critical as she ought to be.

I have so far given you some empty charges, and I know you are waiting for some substance. I don't know what I can prove, but I'm sure you can use what I have to say and will perform further investigations into this thing.

Let's talk about some of his claims. Ours was the ninth workshop. In the workshop previous to ours, held in North Dakota, students supposedly reached speeds of up to 1,200 words per minute. At least one person somewhere and sometime supposedly reached the 1,600 words per minute level. He even claimed that at least one person read rapidly with the book

upside down (I didn't catch for sure if he was talking about print or Braille, but another person assured me he was talking about Braille). He supports this by saying, "The mind doesn't necessarily work from left to right." (No, but one must receive points in the order in which they were intended to be received.) If you want to see his own words in print, read his article in the January 1974 issue of *New Outlook*, the abstract of which reads:

In one of several recent two-week workshops, blind and visually handicapped persons have increased their Braille reading speed from an average of 138 words per minute to 710. The techniques, which vary with the individual readers, are developed through a series of exercises involving the rapid scanning of each page, using one or both hands and from one to six fingers. *Comprehension is affected only slightly.* [Emphasis added.]

These and other claims are false or, at best, gross exaggerations. One of the points to dwell on is the last sentence in his abstract. He has no basis for saying that comprehension is affected only slightly. He doesn't measure comprehension, although he seems to think he does. Refer to his article where he admits that his method of testing is considered unscientific. He gives the impression in his article that he asks questions of the student about the material read. It wasn't as it appears in his article. He says, "This method is not considered scientific, despite the fact that it elicits much more satisfying information about the person's comprehension than does the usual standardized set of questions." Even if he asks the kind of questions he implies, he might have a good debate by some. But he doesn't ask the questions he implies, and his only basis of making a statement about comprehension is the questions he asks orally, and he claims that comprehension is

affected only slightly. Comprehension is affected significantly because the student is only skimming, receiving very little detail at the high rates claimed and getting only general ideas (when reading at those "phenomenal" rates). "The real point is that these people were thrilled and enthusiastic about their accomplishments, scientific or not." In my class, most went down there enthusiastic, but after a couple days, we were anything but thrilled and enthusiastic. Yes, I know, one cannot expect much in two days or two weeks, but it doesn't take long to see that he has no tricks, no new methods, no new principles. I don't think he has anything that a good Braille teacher doesn't have (except, perhaps, a Ph. D.).

Positive thinking and the power of suggestion play important roles in this course. He doesn't lecture but merely talks about how rapidly others are reading. In his article, he lists a series of "steps" to faster reading, step one of which is "Be enthusiastic and remain convinced that you can increase your reading rate whether you are blind, partially sighted, or sighted." It is questionable whether this needs to be called a step, but notice the psychological aspects.

A class session proceeds something like this (ours were three hours long with breaks): first, a warm-up drill which consists of moving your hands rapidly over the Braille without comprehending anything—that is, "for speed only." We might do this for periods of ten or fifteen seconds, several times. Later, we read at a fast rate for a minute or half-minute and then discuss what we read with the person across the table. You might go over this same material three times and he will walk around the room asking each individual

how fast he or she was reading. The rate is obtained by counting the number of lines read, multiplying by nine (average number of words per line). He will ask the student to give him (the teacher) the rate of the fastest of the three readings. This is the rate he writes in his records. I think he asked for our rates once a day. It should be clear by now that the rate at the beginning of the course was accompanied by one hundred percent, or almost one hundred percent, comprehension while the ending rate is grossly inflated, being accompanied by a considerably lower comprehension rate. Later, we read new material several times, discussing what we read with the person sitting across the table. In between, he talks about how fast other people are reading and might talk about some other things, but he does not lecture. It seems as if he has developed some phenomenal thing which works, although he doesn't know why it works. There are no answers; it just works, that's all.

I have been assured that there is a difference between skimming and speed reading. According to the definitions which I have seen, this cannot be called speed reading. One student said that she was timed at three hundred words per minute a few days before the end of the course, but she admitted to me that she recognized fewer than fifty and perhaps only twenty of those three hundred. I'm not saying that this was a typical example, but it could be. I have no idea what he is saying about the results of our August workshop. You can easily pass your hands over one thousand words per minute, but, of course, your comprehension might be five percent or less.

I noticed that although my classmates were not excited about their

"accomplishments," they didn't display their disappointment too readily. That is, they didn't until someone else admitted being disappointed. It seemed that they were made to feel inferior or that they had some inherent inability if they did not meet their goals (I am not saying that the originator intended it to be this way). I am thinking of one woman, in particular, who didn't let on that she was disappointed until I told her how I felt.

As I said, we had an observer from North Dakota the whole two weeks. For her own project, she gave us reading comprehension tests before and after the course. This was, as far as I know, the first and only time comprehension was measured in a Braille speed reading workshop, and it wasn't done by the originator. I cannot guess what her conclusions are except that the claims for the course need to be qualified and modified. She also conducted a workshop of her own after returning to North Dakota. In addition to writing her dissertation on this subject, she intends to write one or two articles which will probably appear in the *New Outlook* in the spring. I have a feeling that she won't be nearly as critical of the course as she ought to be. I would be glad to comment on her conclusions after I learn what they are.

If I tried to anticipate every question you might have, I would never get this sent off to you. I will be glad to answer any questions you might have.

In your investigation, you might find out what you can on this: Someone said the Hadley School wanted the originator to write some kind of course on Braille speed reading for them, but he declined.

It would also be interesting, but perhaps irrelevant, to know what the originator did

before 1967, his first year at Culver-Stockton.

Glad to help you and will be glad to continue to work with you.

Sincerely,

RON OCKEN.

**ROBERT ACOSTA'S NOTE
TO PRESIDENT JERNIGAN**

DEAR MR. JERNIGAN: I hope you will read the enclosed letter as carefully as I did. I wish to assure you I have investigated the charges made by Mr. Ocken. I believe that Braille needs the support of the NFB and that our sponsorship of Dr. McBride's course is a way for us to provide such support. I recommend we go on with the workshop and I will be sending you a release in the next few days. Please respond to this letter as I await your decision.

ROBERT ACOSTA.

PRESIDENT JERNIGAN TO ROBERT ACOSTA

DEAR BOB: I have read with care and concern Ron Ocken's letter to you concerning Braille speed reading. If the Teachers Division wishes to proceed with sponsorship of the workshop here in Des Moines, I am agreeable. We will furnish the space and the books—at least, to the extent that our library has them. I assume you or Dr. McBride will take care of everything else: recruiting students, making arrangements for their enrollment and transportation, handling housing and financial details, et cetera. I leave it entirely to you, and I am willing to abide by your judgment.

I am sending your release and Ron Ocken's letter to the *Monitor* editors with the request that consideration be given to publication.

Cordially,

KENNETH JERNIGAN,

President, National Federation of the Blind.

□

BLIND VENDORS CAUGHT IN SQUEEZE

BY

PATRICK LACKEY

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Editor's Note.—Since this news story's original publication, the President signed (on December 9, 1974) the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1974, which also contains the Randolph-Sheppard Amendments of 1974 providing that the proceeds from vending machines go to blind vendors, ranging from thirty percent to one hundred percent, depending on whether the machines are in direct competition with the blind vendor.

About a dozen blind persons operate cafeterias and vending facilities in Federal buildings in Iowa, according to John Taylor, Assistant Director for the Iowa Commission for the Blind in charge of field operations.

Included are two cafeterias and eleven stands. One cafeteria is in the Federal Building in Des Moines, the other in the National Animal Disease Laboratory in

Ames. The stands are in Federal buildings in Des Moines, Council Bluffs, Sioux City, Fort Dodge, Cedar Rapids, Davenport, and Iowa City, and in post offices in Des Moines, Waterloo, and Cedar Rapids. There is a stand in the Federal Courts Building here.

Taylor said the annual incomes of the blind operators range from a few thousand dollars to about twenty thousand dollars earned by Sylvester Nemmers, operator of the large cafeteria in the Federal Building at 210 Walnut Street here. Three blind persons work for him.

Warren Duckett, 47, who has a small shop in the basement of the Federal Courthouse at East First and Walnut Streets, said he earns about \$3,600 a year.

Taylor said the Iowa Commission for the Blind has successfully combated most attempts to replace blind vendors. For example, he said, plans for the Federal Building here initially did not include space for food operations by the blind. He said, "We appealed that to the GSA (General Services Administration) regional director in Kansas City and were summarily turned down."

The Commission then appealed to the administrator of the GSA in Washington, D.C., and eventually convinced Federal officials that space should be provided. Besides the cafeteria on the sixth floor, there is a small vendor's shop on the first floor, also operated by a blind person.

However, the blind commission has not been as successful with post offices, Taylor

said. Taylor said the blind vendor's shop in the new Post Office Building here is doing only about one-third as much business as did the previous one in the old downtown Post Office.

One reason is that there is less walk-in traffic at the new Post Office. But also, he said, "We lost space proportionately." He explained that in the old Post Office, the employees' shop was about the same size as the blind vendor's, but the employees have about forty times as much space in the new building. He said the blind vendor has only about ninety square feet of space.

Taylor said the Commission for the Blind "objected" to the postmaster about the smallness of the blind vendor's shop, compared to the employee association's. But he said the objection got no results.

Des Moines Automatique, Inc., which operates the large lunchroom in the Post Office here, has two blind persons working full time in the lunchroom, Automatique officials said. In addition, the firm pays some \$3,600 to the blind person who operates her own stand there, said Postmaster Earl Curtis.

The vending company pays eleven percent of its gross take to the Post Office Employees Welfare Committee, said Robert Jones, the committee's secretary-treasurer. The fee totals about \$14,400 a year, Jones said. The money goes into a "recreation fund" for Des Moines postal employees and is used for such things as flowers for ill members, employee picnics, and retirement gifts, Jones said. □

CALIFORNIA CONVENTION

BY

MICHAEL HINGSON

On November 1-3, 1974, over four hundred Federationists gathered at the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel for the annual fall convention of the National Federation of the Blind of California. Throughout the course of the meeting, we saw just how far we as a movement have come, but unfortunately we also saw how much further we have to go.

All have heard by now of the ever-increasing amount of custodialism which is appearing on our college campuses. During his superb banquet address, our National President, Dr. Kenneth Jernigan, showed how extremely serious this problem has become by describing a teacher's college in Kansas which has developed special medical and social requirements for its handicapped students.

Dr. Jernigan also discussed the "sense of purpose and community" which exists within the Federation. On Sunday morning we showed just how unified we are as we elected our new officers. Not only was every officer elected by acclamation, but as the call went out for "any other nominations," the delegates loudly and vigorously responded "no!" Where else would you find such spirit but at a Federation convention? When the cheers finally died down, those who were elected to office were: president, Perry Sundquist; first vice president, Lawrence Marcelino; second vice president, Robert Acosta; secretary, Jerrold Drake; treasurer, Charles Smalley; and executive committee members, Allen Jenkins, LaVyrle Johnson, Alice Preston, and Walter Thomas.

Though everyone looked forward with eager anticipation to Dr. Jernigan's banquet address and the election of officers, there was first a great deal of other work to be done. It all began Friday evening, November 1st, with the convening of a number of NFBC standing committees.

Saturday morning, after an excellent executive committee breakfast, the convention got down to business. At the end of the credentials committee report, our two newest chapters, the Kern County chapter and the Hemecinto chapter were welcomed into the NFBC. Dr. Jernigan discussed what has been happening at the national level and told us of the latest NAC developments. Most important of all, Dr. Jernigan discussed the sad state of our fundraising efforts. He said that we are going to have to devise other means of financing the Federation, including all the personal contributions we can give.

One of the main topics of discussion was employment of the blind. Under the guidance of moderator Don Queen, the chairman of the NFBC Committee on Employment Assistance, a panel discussion, which included three members of the Los Angeles committee on the employment of the handicapped, described the function and progress of its work. The members of the panel all felt that much progress had been made in the employment of the blind but agreed that there is still work to be done, including the education of employers as to the true nature of blindness.

Gary Mackenstadt moderated a panel in which coordinators from three college

campuses discussed their programs for the handicapped and the philosophy behind them. The afternoon session ended with a presentation by Manuel Urena, Program Manager for Services to the Blind in the California State Department of Vocational Rehabilitation. Manuel discussed a wide variety of topics including the attempt to remove the BEP program from its present spot under the program manager for services to the blind.

In a convention where there is never time to stop and rest, everyone went immediately from the general session to one of many special division meetings.

Saturday night, over 350 Federationists again gathered for the convention banquet. The master of ceremonies, Muzzy Marcelino, lead us through the many events of what certainly was the best NFBC banquet yet. During the course of the evening, chapters and individuals donated over \$1500 to the NFBC. The many NFBC scholarship winners were recognized and given their awards. One of the greatest moments of the banquet occurred when Perry Sundquist acclaimed retiring president Tony Mannino. He said, in part: "Tony has been a veritable ombudsman for all of the blind of the State, handling the many and complex problems of the presidency with intelligence, skill, and above all, providing in all aspects of his job leadership of the highest possible caliber." He continued, "To his colleagues in the movement he brings a warm and steadfast personality. To his fellow blind in California and the Nation, he has already brought a richer life. What more can one

say? What more need be said?" Tony was then presented the Dr. Jacobus tenBroek Award by Hazel tenBroek.

Sunday morning saw us all ready and willing to put in another hard day of convention work, and we got right to it by passing resolutions dealing with a wide variety of subjects, including various aspects of SSI and the BEP program. The delegates also voted to raise State dues from two dollars to three dollars per year.

During the legislative report, Muzzy Marcelino described the dangerous master plan for the education of the handicapped. Because of the enactment of this plan, there may be a vigorous attempt to once again lump all handicapped students together under one program.

The final item on what was certainly a busy agenda was a speech given by Robert Acosta entitled "What Price Compromise?" in which he described instances in which others tried to tell those of us who are blind how to live our lives.

As I said before, it is impossible to properly describe such a spirited convention. Even with all the excitement and cheers, the convention so well that we adjourned three hours earlier than anticipated. It just goes to show what can be done when everyone works together as a team. If you were at this last convention, then you certainly know just how truly great it was. If, however, you missed it, then you had better begin making plans to attend both conventions next year, because somehow they will be even better. □

NORTH CAROLINA CONVENTION

BY

JAN NICHOLSON

The fifth annual convention of the National Federation of the Blind of North Carolina was held September 20-22, 1974, at the Cavalier Inn in Charlotte.

Various committees and other groups held pre-convention meetings on Friday evening. Our vending stand operators came out of their meeting with the feeling that the only thing that can be done for the vending stand program of North Carolina is simply to tear it up and start all over again.

The convention was called to order Saturday morning by our president, Mrs. Robert M. Staley. After warm greetings and words of welcome from Mrs. Donald Conder, president of the host chapter, and a warm welcome to the city of Charlotte by Milton Short, city councilman and congressional candidate, Mrs. Staley read a wonderful report of the activities of the NFBNC since our last annual convention. It seems that our State agency is beginning to recognize us as the organized blind of our State, and this was substantiated by the fact that from fifteen to twenty agency workers and officials attended our entire convention, starting early Friday evening and staying through our business meeting until around noon on Sunday.

The remainder of the Saturday morning session consisted of the legislative report by John Niceley, legislative chairman; national report by James Gashel, NFB Washington Representative; NFB Convention report by Ike Collins; and news from our regional library by Mrs. Marion Leith.

The Saturday afternoon program consisted of reports from Bernie Rollins, field representative of the Social Security Administration, concerning Supplemental Security Income; an overview of the Division of Services for the Blind of North Carolina by Dr. William Waters, division director; service at our Rehabilitation Center by Gene Nelson, program director; and current status of the vending stand program by Steve Johnson, deputy chief of Business Enterprises. It seems that Mr. Johnson is relatively new with the agency and is not yet well oriented, but he did tell us something about the vending stand programs of our neighboring states.

The highlight of the convention was our banquet Saturday evening. President Staley presented a charter to our newest chapter, the Skyland Federation of the Blind of Asheville, North Carolina. The real highlight of the evening was the banquet address by James Gashel. I fail to see how anyone could have left that room without a better understanding of what Federationism is all about after listening to that very entertaining and enlightening speech. President Staley presented a service award to Representative David Jordan for the wonderful work he is doing for us through the State legislature. Two other representatives, Jo Foster and Roy Spoon, were with us, and the NFBNC owes much to these three representatives for the help they are to us with our legislative program.

Our business meeting was called to order promptly at 9:00 a.m. Sunday by president Staley. This consisted of reading of the

minutes of our last annual convention, treasurer's report, sharing time, chapter reports, resolutions, elections of officers, and other business.

John Niceley, chairman of the resolutions committee, presented eight very good resolutions. These were concerned with an amendment to our State bill of rights, which was adopted; vending stand program, calling for abolition of the set aside fund, which was referred to our board of directors for action; a resolution asking that appointments to our State Commission for the Blind be more representative of blind groups, which was adopted. A very controversial resolution calling for an in-depth study of the services for the blind in North Carolina was referred

back to the committee and to our board of directors to be rewritten and acted upon.

This was an election year and we think we elected a good slate of officers. These are as follows: president, Mrs. Robert M. Staley; first vice president, John Niceley; second vice president, Ralph Thompson; secretary, Mrs. Donald Conder; treasurer, Mrs. Pat Thompson; two two-year board members, Byron Sikes and Mrs. Hilda Shuler; a one-year board member, Jonathan May; NFB Convention delegate, Mrs. Staley; and NFB Convention alternate delegate, John Niceley.

After selecting Greensboro, North Carolina, for our 1975 convention site, the 1974 NFBNC convention adjourned. □

RECIPE OF THE MONTH

BY
SYLVIA PEARSON

Editor's Note.—Mrs. Pearson is a member of the Des Moines chapter, National Federation of the Blind of Iowa.

TOFFEE COFFEE CAKE

Ingredients

1 cup dark brown sugar (packed)
½ cup white sugar
¼ pound butter
2 cups bread flour
1 egg
1 teaspoon baking soda
1 teaspoon vanilla
1 cup buttermilk
6 Heath candy bars (broken in small pieces)
¼ to ½ cup chopped nuts

Method

Mix the brown and white sugars, butter, and flour like a piecrust. Set aside one-half cup crumbs. To the remainder, add the egg, baking soda, vanilla, and buttermilk. Beat well by hand. Pour into a long pan. Top with the one-half cup crumbs, Heath bars, and nuts. Bake at 350° for about 35 minutes. □

MONITOR MINIATURES

Gary Mackenstadt writes that on the weekend of November 15, 16, and 17, hundreds of shoppers at the Northridge (California) Fashion Plaza in the west San Fernando Valley were given the opportunity to learn about the Federation. Officials of the plaza provided an opportunity for groups concerned with the problems of handicapped persons to have displays within the shopping complex, one of the largest shopping centers in the Los Angeles area. Needless to say, Federationists were there in numbers to educate the public about the philosophy of blindness. Over twenty Federationists, most of whom were members of the West Valley chapter, manned the NFB table during the weekend. Shoppers had their names brailled, while NFB and NFBC brochures were passed out. Through the auspices of the Handicapped Students Center at California State University, Northridge, Denise Mackenstadt was able to procure the use of a screen and projector for the weekend. Having the use of the projector enabled the continuous showing of the NFBC slides, which were so ably put together by Nancy Smalley of the Glendale-Burbank chapter. These slides served to educate the public as well as to attract the shoppers to the Federation table. "In retrospect," Gary writes, "it has been concluded that the venture at the Northridge Fashion Plaza was a success. The weekend afforded Federationists the opportunity to spread the word about the philosophy of blindness and the blind movement."

Recently, a blind rehabilitation officer attended the National Rehabilitation

Association convention in Puerto Rico. He was accompanied by his wife as a guide. The Internal Revenue Service has decided that the expenses of the wife are allowable business expenses and can be deducted from income taxes. Because this was adjudicated below the Tax Court level, it will not be promulgated and binding. However, blind persons incurring similar expenses will realize that they may be deducted from their income taxes.

Dr. Richard Kinney, deaf-blind executive director of the Hadley School for the Blind in Winnetka, Illinois, will call for a worldwide conference on rehabilitation of the deaf-blind "and more progress in the next five years than in the last fifty" when he assumes chairmanship of the Committee on Services to the Deaf-Blind of the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind.

Friday, September 20, 1974, was a landmark day for the blind of Southwest Georgia for it was that day that the National Federation of the Blind of Southwest Georgia was organized. The organization represents the desire of the blind of Southwest Georgia to work for a better life as all through the Federation. That Friday started early for State president Frazer and the leaders of the organizational effort as they met in Albany Friday morning. Among the activities scheduled were a TV appearance and a tour of the area's vending stands. Various other activities took place during the rest of the day culminating in the meeting that

evening at the Albany Technical School.
[From the NFB of Georgia *Journal*.]

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Functional blindness as distinguished from legal blindness, as determined by the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, encompasses those persons who cannot read regular newsprint with correction in the better eye. It is estimated that more than one million Americans are functionally blind.

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Jack M. Redding of 7653 Bellerive, Houston, Texas 77036, is organizing a national blind writers association. Those interested should contact him on tape or in ink, but not in Braille.

* * * * *

The Atomic Energy Commission has developed a Braille machine that may greatly reduce the cost and bulk of reading material for the blind. The machine, about the size of a portable typewriter, stores reading material in coded symbols on magnetic tape. Information from the tape appears as a series of raised dots on a plastic reading belt. The blind user touches the moving belt with his finger-tips, getting the same impressions as he would from embossed Braille. This could greatly increase the availability of books for the blind due to the savings in cost and bulk over the conventional Braille books. The magnetic tape is capable of storing a four-hundred-page book on a 3¼-inch diameter reel of ¼-inch tape. A

corresponding Braille book would require five hundred times the volume for storage as the tape.

* * * * *

Clarence E. Collins of Charlotte, North Carolina, has come up with a splendid idea. He writes: "Since Dr. Jernigan has requested and received donations from the members of the National Federation of the Blind, it occurred to me that there are a great many members who would like to contribute to our good work, but who have never done so unless they could do it collectively. Therefore, I conceived the idea of forming a dollar-a-month club within our local chapter, the Queen City Federation of the Blind of Charlotte, North Carolina, and I was delighted at the warm reception my idea received. The purpose of this club is to allow everybody who joins to give as little as one dollar a month to the NFB. Enclosed you will find my check in the amount of sixteen dollars which will cover the first installment of the payment for all the members, except for one which will be paid next month. It is sincerely hoped that this idea will catch on and that soon we will have dollar-a-month clubs in hundreds of chapters throughout the Federation."

* * * * *

The NFB of Seattle, Washington, has adopted a similar plan, another instance of every Federation member wanting to help out. Jim Dotson, the chapter president, writes that during their meeting of December 21, the NFB of Seattle passed the following motion: "It was moved,

seconded, and carried that the NFBS dues be raised from two dollars to four dollars and be distributed as follows: \$1.20 to the State, \$1.20 to the National, and the balance to the local treasury." They also added an amendment so that "anyone who felt the increase of two dollars was more than he or she could pay, a group of our members volunteer to cover the additional cost." Jim concludes, "If every affiliate in the Nation raised its dues by only one dollar, and send that dollar to National Headquarters, we would have an additional fifty thousand dollars in our Treasury."

The New Jersey Commission for the Blind and Visually Handicapped conducted its first seminar on employment opportunities for blind college students at the commission's rehabilitation center on Friday, December 27, 1974. Among the eight business and professional people who participated in this seminar were Mr. Fred Boarde from Just One Break of New York City; Mrs. Joyce Taft, a service representative for Social Security; Mr. Milford Force, a vending facilities operator with the New Jersey Commission for the Blind and Visually Handicapped; Ms. Susan Robinson, a teacher of voice at Westminster College of Music in Princeton, New Jersey; Mr. Robert Whitstock, first vice president of Seeing Eye in Morristown, New Jersey. After the speakers had completed their talks, the students were divided into groups for a question and answer session.

Mary Frack of Philadelphia reports that the new president of the Northeast chapter of the Pennsylvania Federation of the Blind is Mrs. Dorothy Crea and the corresponding secretary is Mr. Erk Oristaglio.

Blind voters were able to vote without assistance in the recent elections in Talladega, Alabama, since the electronic voting machines had Braille strips bearing the same information given to sighted voters. The idea was originated by the officers of the local chapter of the Alabama Federation of the Blind.

Any California Orientation Center for the Blind alumnus wishing to join the Alumni Association should write to its president, Jim Willows, 3966 Yale Street, Livermore, California 94550.

The Xavier Society for the Blind, 154 East 23rd Street, New York, New York 10010, announces that its free Braille Catholic calendar is now available. The calendar will be sent free to any blind person in the United States and Canada as long as the supply lasts.

Keith Wiglesworth, Box 877-C, Mars Hill, North Carolina 28754, tells us that recording is a big hobby with him, and he'd appreciate it if blind high school or college students would send him correspondence on cassettes.

The United Foundation of Detroit barely got its 1974 campaign under way before an eighty-five-member blind group severely criticized one of the agencies benefiting from the drive, saying it was unresponsive to the needs of the blind. The Greater Detroit Society for the Blind was singled out by the NFB of Michigan as allocating what it receives from the United Foundation for salaries, rather than for services for the blind. □

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